



Yulie Woodward

The City of Spokane

Weekly News Update for Aug. 17

Information about COVID-19 is evolving rapidly, and our important work as a City is continuing. We want to make sure our City employees have up-to-date information on both COVID and employee news. We will provide this update, as needed, to communicate what you need to know, while we work to reduce the spread of this disease in our community and continue to provide critical public services.

A Message from Mayor Woodward

This message was sent yesterday to all City employees. It is being shared again as a reminder ahead of the masking requirement that begins Wednesday.

City team members,

Change has been the one constant throughout the pandemic. Unfortunately, that continues to be the situation as case counts are once again rising sharply in our community.

In order to protect City employees, their families, and members of the public who may visit City facilities, we will return to requiring masks indoors. **Effective Wednesday, August 18, masking will be required for all City employees, customers, and visitors in all City facilities when not sitting alone at your desk.**

Masking guidance is changing out of our desire to keep City employees and their families—particularly those with children too young to receive vaccines—safe. We also want to support masks in an effort to avoid stricter measures that could challenge our community once again.

Employees are encouraged to voluntarily begin masking indoors immediately. A masking FAQ is attached for further reference and information. Along with masking, we are reminding everyone to:

- Respect the 6-foot social distance rule
- Avoid large gatherings in conference rooms or other communal work spaces
- Refrain from any shared food, such as pizza, cakes, donuts, muffins, and other items that are not individually packaged, at all times

In June, when we determined that those who had been vaccinated could remove their masks in our City facilities, we were proud of the work that we had done and hopeful that we had reached a turning point in the fight against the COVID pandemic. We remain proud of our essential employees and those who have gotten vaccines and followed health guidance to help stop the spread of the virus.

However, COVID has once again proven to be a difficult adversary. We also want to encourage everyone to take advantage of vaccines that remain readily available in our community. Planning is underway to host onsite vaccination clinics for employees to use if they choose.

Vaccination remains the best way to protect yourselves and other from the virus. The new highly contagious Delta variant, we are told by public health officials, also can be spread by those who have been vaccinated because of high viral loads. Those who are vaccinated still are typically asymptomatic or have light symptoms if they catch COVID.

Our thank you for your dedication to serving the community, even as we have faced uncertain times. We will keep track of continued local, state, and federal guidance and changes in disease prevalence and transmission in the coming weeks, and we will continue to adapt.

Mayor Woodward

More Information to Assist Our Employees

Here are some more resources from our Employee Assistance Program:

- [Healthy Pets, Health People](#)
There are many health benefits of owning a pet. They can increase opportunities to exercise, get outside, and socialize. Regular walking or playing with pets can decrease blood pressure, cholesterol levels, and triglyceride levels. Pets can help manage loneliness and depression by giving you companionship.

Employee Information Portal (covid19.spokanecity.org/)

Remember, this Employee Information Portal is a great resource for employees to stay current on what's happening with the COVID-19 response. The [Employee Information Portal](#) can be accessed from work or home, using a computer or mobile device. All of the emailed information we have sent to employees is archived here.